

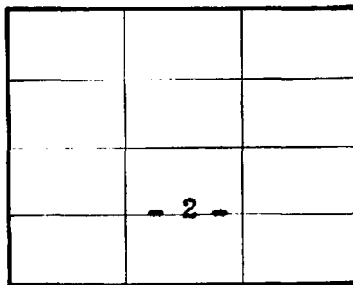
March 1, 1946

Dear Dr. Fry:

I have your letter of February fifteenth and have read the copy of your letter to Dean DeVane. I think you have done a good job of exposition and explanation. Your letter is clear and easy to understand.

The major comment on the task that you had before you that I think I would have made is that our colleges are failing pretty uniformly in the formulation of their jobs and their opportunities, mostly because they are paying so little attention to the personalities, temperaments, and especially the motivations of students. The colleges are wasting a tremendous amount of time haggling over the curriculum, its so-called balance, its so-called emphasis, and its ideal components. Such a pre-occupation is reasonable enough, as it represents intelligent attention to one half of the problem of education, but it is pathetically inadequate unless the other half gets a great deal more attention than it has had in the past. Perhaps I can say this in another way by telling you that Conant told me that the only valid and really helpful criticism that had come of the Harvard publication entitled "Education For a Democratic Society," or a "Free Society," or some such title--you have seen the book--came from psychologists who pointed out that that careful treatise on education had the grave defect of forgetting all about the variety of those who are to be educated and especially their motives and motivations. I have read my share of the current literature on education and will continue to do so, but I almost never read anything that meets my critical feeling that the real and pressing problems of education come to the surface in the office of the dean of students, or in the college doctor's office, or, obviously, in the office of the college psychiatrist. Curriculum structure and flavor almost never comes to the surface in those places as the major issue, but psychological and psychiatric considerations, and perhaps sometimes sociological, are there all the time. I would like to make it very clear, furthermore, that I don't believe the problems are limited to the students. They are just as cogent and as important and as picturesque when one thinks of characters and motivation and behavior of the teachers.


Dr. Clements C. Fry



March 1, 1946

That is the major comment I would make on your letter.

There are two or three minor ones. On the first page, you say that the teaching of psychiatry and specialized training in that field is not now principally within the province of the universities. I would have phrased that to imply that the universities were losing an opportunity and that they had better look sharp, or it will be gone completely.

On page two, you might have mentioned the fact that this year Wallace Donham is giving a course to Harvard undergraduates on human relations. Incidentally, I think that is enough of a compliment to Yale, as it is a suggestion that Yale may have retrograded somewhat from an earlier recognition of the importance of psychology and psychiatry in education.

On page four, you gave me an interesting bit of information in saying that more than one third of law suits are divorce cases which, as you say, usually involve the disposition of children, and that lawyers are not better prepared to deal with human affairs although it is pretty obvious that divorce belongs in the category of human affairs. I can give you an interesting evidence of the legal view, although I think it is perhaps a bit unfair to the profession as a whole. The Marriage Counsel Bureau in Philadelphia ran into a snag in their work because either the Philadelphia or the Pennsylvania Bar delivered itself of the solemn opinion that since marriage is a contract, marriage counseling should be done exclusively by lawyers. There is logic grinding its relentless way with all the sensibility and discrimination that we associate with a sausage machine.

Best regards, and thanks for letting me see your letter.

Sincerely yours,

ALAN GREG

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